

424

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO. 25X1A

COUNTRY Indochina/China

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SUBJECT Conditions in Democratic Republic of Vietnam--
Controlled Areas of Tonkin

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1. Factory Workers. Workers from the city as well as those recruited from the rural areas are now required to live in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) factories and workshops where they are employed. Their families live in nearby villages. The DRV shop workers live completely under Communist control and in some cases their families must live in a "prohibited area" within workshop limits. Every industry is controlled by a branch of the Communist Party of Indochina (PCI). A PCI worker is entitled to every assistance whereas a non-party worker receives constant surveillance and little assistance.
2. The Military Medical Service (MMS) provides drugs for factory workers, but in malaria cases only one quinine tablet dissolved in water must be divided among several workers. A worker's family cannot receive MMS treatment since they are theoretically entitled to Civilian Medical Service treatment, an agency which exists in name only.
3. A worker's monthly salary plus family allowance is just enough to cover his personal expenses; hence the rest of his family must engage in some work in order to earn subsistence.
4. Civil Servants. Salaries received by DRV officials are not sufficient for their family's support in spite of additional allowances. They must secure their own housing but receive certain assistance from the local Administrative and Resistance Committees.
5. If an official is a member of the Communist Party of Indochina he receives considerable support from the authorities, but no additional salary. A non-PCI member can occupy a high position if competent, but he is under constant surveillance. All, except for certain wealthy high officials, have a very low morale.
6. Trade. The DRV no longer enforces an economic embargo on goods imported from French-controlled zones, and in principle people can trade freely. DRV trade and supply organizations have destroyed private competition, however, by buying goods in the French-controlled zone for resale at low prices. As a result there is no private trading and the majority of merchants live by doing transport work for the DRV-controlled organizations.

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7. Army Finances and Food. The rice ration for each soldier is 35 kilograms a month. Because of its sale or trade value to civilians, rice is more important than a salary to the soldier. If a soldier is sent to another unit on detached duty he must contribute his rice to a collective meal. In such cases an average ration would be four bowls of rice for a two day tour of duty.
8. European soldiers, regardless of rank, receive a 500 Ho Chi Minh piaster bonus for food, in addition to 35 kilograms of rice. The majority use this bonus to buy cigarettes and luxury items and as a result are no better clothed or fed than the Vietnamese soldiers.
9. A special fund of 100,000 to 500,000 piasters per month for secret or unusual expenses has been established for commanders of regimental level and above.
10. Vo Nguyen Giap has issued a circular to interzone commanders to give Chinese Communist troops special treatment. Each soldier, according to his grade, gets from 500 to 1,500 additional Ho Chi Minh piasters a month to buy cigarettes and extra food, and also receives 35 kilos of rice a month.
11. Catholics. They are suspect and badly treated. The DRV takes every opportunity to penalize them under the charge that they are anti-Communist and pro-French. As a result of DRV propaganda, the populace has become extremely anti-Catholic.
12. The Civilian Population. In general, families in the DRV areas are unable to produce much, their assets are decreasing and taxes are rising considerably. In addition they are obliged to work for the military organizations or as laborers in operational zones.

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